**Trail of Tears Project**

Introduction

Students may work alone or within a group with one other person in their class. Students will design and create a poster containing facts about the Trail of Tears as well as a collage and concluding statement expressing their or the group’s feelings about the event.

Learning Targets/Objectives

1. Students will be able to read and understand primary and secondary documents that are relevant to the events and points of view of the Trail of Tears.
2. Students will be able to communicate data about the Trail of Tears on a poster.
3. Students will be able to create a collage and a statement that captures the individual or group’s feelings about the Trail of Tears.

Background

The Trail of Tears was the result of Andrew Jackson’s policy of Indian Removal in the Southeastern United States. While Jackson’s designs on Indian Territory east of the Mississippi River involved Indian nations such as the Cherokees, Seminoles, Chickasaws, Choctaws, and Creeks, as well as others from approximately 1814 until 1840, "the Trail of Tears" refers to the forced march of Cherokees from Georgia to Oklahoma from 1838 to 1839. This episode, legitimized by the disputed Treaty of New Echota, resulted in thousands of deaths and the removal of the Cherokee Nation from its ancestral homelands.

Materials

**MAPS**

* [**Map of the Cherokee Nation in Georgia, 1830**](http://georgiainfo.galileo.usg.edu/histcountymaps/cherokeenation1830map.htm)
* [**Map of Cherokee Removal Routes**](http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/118trail/118images/118map2ch.jpg)
* [**Interactive map of the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail**](https://www.nps.gov/trte/planyourvisit/passport-program.htm) (Scroll down and click on "The Trail of Tears National Historic Trail")

**PAINTING**

* [***The Trail of Tears* by Robert Lindneux, 1942**](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h1567.html)

**SECONDARY SOURCES**

* [**Cherokee Nation Timeline**](http://kcac.kennesaw.edu/thematic_content/reclaiming_displaced_heritages/time.html)
* [**"What happened on the Trail of Tears?"**](http://www.nps.gov/trte/historyculture/stories.htm)

**PRIMARY SOURCES**

* [**Letter from Chief John Ross protesting the Treaty of New Echota**](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h3083t.html)
* [**Transcript of President Andrew Jackson’s message to Congress "On Indian Removal" (1830)**](http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=25&page=transcript)
* [**Treaty of New Echota, final paragraph of Article 1**](http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/che0439.htm#mn2)

Essential Questions to answer

What incidents led to the Trail of Tears and what is your perspective of this event?

Questions connecting it to the students to answer

Does the United States government have the right to make you move out of your house? Why or why not?

What would you do if you were required to move by their government?

Overview of Project

1. Introduce background information on the Trail of Tears via a brief lecture or discussion.
2. View the mapsof the Cherokee Nation in Georgia, 1830, and the Cherokee Removal Routes. Look over and discuss the distance that the Cherokees walked and conditions they endured.
3. Discuss and look at *The Trail of Tears* by Robert Lindneux. We will discuss what is happening in the painting and how its people in it are depicted.
4. Distribute the information packet to each students and or group. The packet will contain copies of secondary sources and copies of primary sources. It would be most effective to keep the materials in a folder before turning in the project.
5. Students will read the secondary sources individually. Then as a group or as an individual, students will write one paragraph that responds to the question, "What was the Trail of Tears?"
6. Next, ask each student or group will read one of the primary sources and complete the "[**Who, What, Where, and When**](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/sites/default/files/inline-pdfs/What%2C%20When%2C%20Where%20and%20Why.pdf)" questions in the packet.

**Part TWO:**

Students will review the information they discovered in their readings of the primary and secondary sources. Mr. Kay will hand out the [**Perspectives on the Trail of Tears poster template**](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/sites/default/files/inline-pdfs/Perspectives%20on%20the%20Trail%20of%20Tears%20poster%20template.pdf) to each student and or group. The students are to answer the following questions in the corners of the poster:

1. What was the Trail of Tears?
2. Who was removed (and from where were they removed)? Where did they resettle?
3. What was John Ross’s opinion of Indian Removal?
4. What was Andrew Jackson’s opinion of Indian Removal?

In the center of the poster, students will create a collage showing how the student and or group feels about the Trail of Tears. Underneath the collage, the student and or group should write a one-sentence statement explaining their feelings about the Trail of Tears.